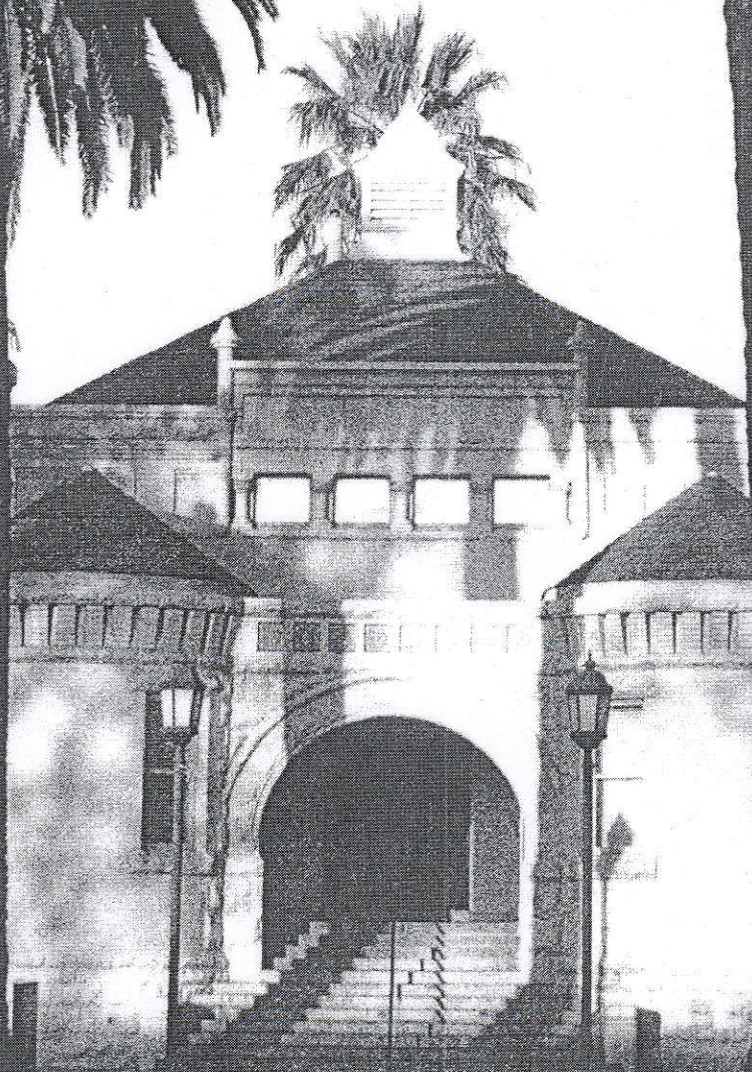
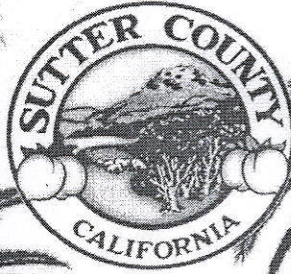


Sutter County Grand Jury Final Report 2009-2010



Cover photo by
Richard C. Grant

Leo Chesney Community Correctional Facility

Introduction

The 2009-2010 Sutter County Grand Jury Criminal Justice Committee conducted an on-site visit of Leo Chesney Community Correctional Facility (LCCCF) on October 2, 2009. The facility is located at 2800 Apricot Street, Live Oak, CA. The committee was given a tour by Paula Ford, Facility Director. A follow up meeting with the staff of LCCCF occurred on November 3, 2009.

The visits were attended by members of the Criminal Justice Committee composed of the following jurors: Susan Countryman, Vera Crabtree, Virginia Gill, Amanda Ohlendorf, Laurie Smandra, and Donna Smith.

Discussion

The LCCCF, owned by Cornell Companies, opened in April 1989. The members of the Grand Jury were provided with informational packets. The LCCCF is the only privately operated women's minimum security prison in the State of California. LCCCF is located on a ten acre site in the City of Live Oak, and can accommodate up to 318 inmates. There is a full-time nurse on-site. A doctor visits the facility on a weekly basis and is available for emergency calls. Currently, no local dental or gynecological services are provided. Inmates in need of these services are transported to the California Correctional Women's Facility at Chowchilla, with a waiting period of three to nine weeks. Inmates with diabetes or seizures are not accepted into LCCCF.

Within two weeks of arrival, the inmates are administered the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) to determine their educational levels in math, reading, and language skills. A newly established goal of achieving a ninth grade reading level for all inmates upon release is now in place as opposed to the previous sixth grade level.

All classes previously offered by Yuba Community College, except the Culinary Arts class, have been cancelled due to the economic crisis. However, LCCCF has started a pilot program with Coastline Community College's Incarcerated Student Education Program with online courses. The inmates or their families must buy the books for coursework. In time, LCCCF hopes to have a lending library from the course books purchased and donated by current students. Should the inmate leave during the course period she can find a proctor and continue with her classes.

All inmates have job assignments. Jobs are designed to afford inmates an opportunity to learn basic job skills, develop good work habits, and attitudes that will increase their marketability for jobs upon release. The inmates are accounted for at all stations during the day through a "time sheet" type of accounting, in addition to six inmate counts per 24 hours.

Inmates are offered a gate pass program or Off Reservation Work Assignment to provide service to the local community. They may be presenting a Prison Preventive Program at a local school, removing graffiti, maintaining local parks, lawns, and gardens around public buildings.

Vocational opportunities include woodshop, gardening and landscaping, pesticide application, culinary arts, and a fiber optics course. LCCCF woodshop inmates create various crafts that are donated locally. The Culinary Arts class offered by Yuba College allows inmates to earn a certificate upon completion. At the end of the last class, 32 inmates received their culinary certificate along with three local students. Only inmates with sufficient time to finish the class are accepted into the Culinary Arts class.

Trauma Informed Substance Abuse Program (TISAP) was a six-month to two-year program. It has been restructured into a 90-day to two-year program to help participants recognize destructive behaviors and learn to change those behaviors. The inmates are encouraged to move into an aftercare program upon completion of the TISAP upon release. A positive reunifying of family connections is also part of the program.

The minimum age for the inmates is 18 years. At the time of our tour, there were approximately 28 women over the age of 50, with the average age ranging between 30-39. The maximum time served is two years with the average stay of four to six months.

It was noted the LCCCF library is small with very few books.

Findings

The Grand Jury finds the LCCCF informational packets are not current.

The Grand Jury finds the LCCCF reading requirement upgrade as an improvement.

The Grand Jury finds the LCCCF alignment with Coast Line College an asset to the inmates.

The Grand Jury finds LCCCF is innovative in the establishment of their self-sufficiently maintained garden program.

The Grand Jury finds the inmates are performing the majority of the maintenance at LCCCF.

The Grand Jury finds LCCCF an asset to the local area by providing community services.

The Grand Jury finds LCCCF library is small with very few books.

The Grand Jury finds dental and gynecological services are not provided locally.

The Grand Jury finds LCCCF is organized, well managed, and the grounds are nicely maintained.

Recommendations

The Grand Jury recommends the LCCCF informational packets be updated.

The Grand Jury commends the reading requirement upgrade as an improvement.

The Grand Jury commends LCCCF for aligning with Coast Line College.

The Grand Jury commends LCCCF for the establishment of their self-sufficiently maintained garden program.

The Grand Jury commends the inmates for performing the majority of the maintenance at LCCCF.

The Grand Jury commends LCCCF for their efforts in providing community service to the local communities.

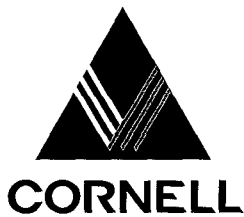
The Grand Jury recommends LCCCF solicit donated books for the onsite library.

The Grand Jury recommends dental and gynecological services be provided locally.

The Grand Jury commends LCCCF for being organized, well managed, and having nicely maintained grounds.

Respondents

Paula Ford, Leo Chesney Community Facility Director



July 14, 2010

Christopher R. Chandler, Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California
County of Sutter
446 Second Street
Yuba City, California 95991

Dear Judge Chandler:

This letter is provided in response to the 2009-2010 Final Report of the Sutter County Grand Jury regarding the Leo Chesney Community Correctional Facility (LCCCF) located in Live Oak, California.

The following recommendations require comment:

The Grand Jury recommends the LCCCF informational packets be updated

We concur with the Grand Jury's recommendation. The color brochure presented to the Grand Jury during their tour of the Leo Chesney Facility offers information about programs and services provided to the inmate population. In April 2010, it was announced that GEO Group, Inc. would be purchasing Cornell Companies, Inc. This acquisition is in process. Once the sale is final, the brochure will be updated to reflect the change in ownership, in addition to program modifications.

The Grand Jury recommends the LCCCF solicit donated books for the onsite library

We concur with the Grand Jury's recommendation. Although the onsite inmate library is small, it contains over 3000 books. The book selections range in genre from science fiction, romance, drama, and mystery, to self help, reference, and educational. We have received generous donations from the Sutter County Library in past years, including a donation of over 500 books in January 2010. We will continue to accept donations in the future. Additionally, we are supplied numerous donations from selfless community members, sometimes on a weekly basis. As we are a small facility with minimal space, all donations are inspected for contraband and viability and stored in our warehouse (currently several thousand books) until needed to replace or rotate existing books based on need and interest. When storage space for donated books becomes an issue, we contribute to Goodwill Industries or the Salvation Army.

The Grand Jury recommends dental and gynecological services be provided locally

We disagree with the Grand Jury's recommendation. The LCCCF contract with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) was approved for a 5-year extension on June 30, 2010. The contract does not require onsite or local dental or gynecological services be provided. If the facility physician or nurse practitioner assess that an inmate requires remedial attention due to a dental or gynecological issue, initial triage is provided and the inmate is transported back to our HUB institution at the Central California Women's Facility (CCWF) located in Chowchilla, California. Prior to transport from CCWF to LCCCF, all inmates are seen by medical staff where a physical exam, to include a pap smear, and dental exam is performed. All inmates received at LCCCF are full duty (able to work any job) and medically cleared.

It should be noted that the Grand Jury's report, although thorough, reflected several inaccuracies. In the report, it reads, *"There is a full-time nurse on-site. A doctor visits the facility on a weekly basis and is available for emergency calls."* In actuality, the LCCCF has 3 full-time nurses on-site (NP, RN, LVN) and the doctor works at the institution 20 hours per week; 4 hours per day, M-F. The nurse practitioner or the doctor is available for emergency calls after hours.

The report also reads, *"Inmates with diabetes or seizures are not accepted into LCCCF."* It is true that inmates with a history of seizures are not sent to LCCCF from CCWF. However, inmates with diabetes who are on oral medication can be housed at our institution. Inmates who are insulin dependent are ineligible to be housed at LCCCF.

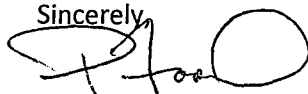
I apologize for any miscommunication to the Grand Jurors that may have resulted in these factual errors.

The Leo Chesney Facility is committed to making a positive difference in the lives of the women in our care, our employees, and the Live Oak community. We appreciate the comments made by the members of the Grand Jury who participated in both the initial tour and the follow up discussion. We remain dedicated to providing quality care and service to the inmates in our charge.

We will forward a copy of the Grand Jury's Report along with this response to the CDCR so they are aware of the Grand Jury's findings.

We appreciate the time and effort of the entire Grand Jury for their dedication and duty to Sutter County. If my staff or I can be of further assistance or service, please do not hesitate to contact me at (530) 695-1800.

Sincerely,



Paula Ford
Facility Director

Cc: George Killinger, Vice President-Secure Division, Cornell Companies, Inc.
Dave Bollinger, CCFA, Programs Administrator -CDCR
John Herrera, CCFA, Facility Captain - CDCR